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INTRODUCTION

This paper attempts to describe some psychological aspects of the Soviet radio's propaganda method, as distinguished from its specific content (which latter was the subject of a report issued on 17 June 1949*). The word "techniques" is here rather broadly defined; the paper covers not only some of the specific tricks or devices used in Soviet radio propaganda, but also some psychological aspects of Radio Moscow's more basic propaganda strategy. On the other hand, since this is a preliminary approach to the problem, there is no attempt to cover systematically all of the elements of the problem. It should be noted that it is impossible to draw a sharp line between the Soviet radio's content and method; method involves the principles of content-selection, and these principles will be briefly considered here, although they are more fully illustrated in the above-mentioned report on the Soviet radio's propaganda content.

The methods of Soviet radio propaganda considered here can be grouped (somewhat arbitrarily) under two broad headings: (a) those which are regularly used by a wide variety of propagandists in many different fields of communication and which are not peculiarly Soviet except with reference to the subjects to which the Soviet radio applies them; and (2) those which are open to serious question from either an ethical standpoint (i.e., "truth") or a practical standpoint (i.e., vulnerability to exposure or exploitation by skillful counter-propaganda). For the purposes of this paper, the first group has been labeled "standard" techniques; the second group, "more vulnerable" techniques. The first group involves principles which may be considered more or less basic to most successful propaganda and which are not of themselves necessarily open to question from either an ethical or practical standpoint. The second group includes those techniques which, because they involve gross distortion, raise the question of whether that distortion can be pointed out and/or exploited by alert propaganda opponents. (It should be pointed out, however, that some of the ways in which Radio Moscow implements the "standard" techniques are actually open to serious question. For instance, the "enormous emphasis on the lying and hypocrisy of the enemy," which is here mentioned in connection with the "effort to appear objective" [a "standard" technique], is not itself either standard or basic to propaganda in general.)

* "The Most Prominent Themes and Sub-Themes in Soviet Radio Propaganda (April 1949)," 17 June 1949,

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S U M M A R Y

"STANDARD" TECHNIQUES

1. Unity and simplicity of basic theme-content. The one most inclusive theme is that the world is engaged in a gigantic struggle between Right and Wrong. The line drawn between the two camps is not simply between East and West; considerable stress is also placed on the contrast, within each Western nation, between the small "imperialist" ruling minority and the great peace-loving, democratic majority. This device seems designed to circumvent the antagonism that might be created if "America" or "Britain" were often attacked as such, and it also adds to the impression of overwhelming numerical superiority--and therefore inevitable ultimate victory--of the "democratic" camp.

2. Diversity of subthemes and illustrations. Repetition and boredom are avoided not by varying the basic themes but by continual change in the material used to illustrate them.

3. Universality of appeal. The old appeals for revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat have almost disappeared (at least in propaganda beamed to foreign audiences); in their place is a stress on more "universal" values--peace, democracy, national independence, morality in general.

4. Effort to appear objective. Though it does not claim neutrality, Moscow does in many ways build up the impression that its version of events is the simple and obvious truth. For example, the commentators' tone of voice is unemotional, their material gives the impression of being factual, there are frequent phrases such as "the whole world knows," and there is an effort to appear self-consistent (e.g., by not contradicting to one national audience what is said to another).

5. Selection and omission. Though it rarely indulges in obvious lying, Moscow continually forces events to fit into and support its own propagandistic picture by the device of selection and omission. Events which are headlined in the Western press are regularly soft-pedalled or omitted entirely from Moscow's output if they represent areas of Soviet defeat, Soviet moral vulnerability, or conflicts (such as the conflict between Democrats and Republicans) which do not coincide with Moscow's two-camps picture of the world.

6. Slanted interpretation. An equally omnipresent device is the use of emotionally loaded words--"monopolists," "people," "admits," "demands," "unmasks," "obedient"--which, in their contexts, imply the Soviet interpretation of events. As a rule it is made difficult or impossible for the listener to distinguish between fact and interpretation.

"MORE VULNERABLE" CHARACTERISTICS

1. Evasion of key issues, such as individual freedom in the Soviet sphere, the implementation of atomic-energy control, Western fear of Soviet aggression and the historical basis of that fear, direct economic comparisons between East and West, the Soviet role in the Satellites, and differences between Eastern and Western definitions of "democracy."

2. Avoidance of basic Bolshevik doctrine, such as the necessity of violence, the distinction between proletariat and petit bourgeoisie (with "dictatorship" reserved for the former), "iron discipline" within the Party, and the earlier Marxian challenge to property rights, religion, patriotism, and parliamentary democracy.

3. Unsupported dogmatism. The factual appearance of Soviet propaganda is misleading. Its essential conclusions, though presented with an air of absolute certainty, are not, as a rule, factually supported; the impression is repeatedly given that the conclusions are so obvious and universally accepted that they do not need proof.

4. Blurring of distinctions. The anti-Soviet Right and the anti-Soviet Left, in the Western world, are of course equally "bad" from the standpoint of the Soviet State. Moscow does not confine itself, however, to pointing up the "bad" or anti-Soviet character of both groups; it often explicitly denounces the anti-Soviet Left as "reactionary." It thus repeatedly blurs the distinction between Right and Left in intra-national Western politics--a distinction which, from a strictly Marxian "class" point of view, might be considered rather important. "Wall Street" and the CIO, for instance, are described as equally "reactionary." Similarly, on the white side of the black-white dichotomy, there is no clear distinction made between Socialism and Communism, or between Socialism and "people's democracy."

5. "Slide-in." An acceptable idea is often followed immediately by a less acceptable one--apparently on the assumption that the listener's attitude of uncritical receptivity

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adopted toward the acceptable idea will also carry over to the less acceptable one.

6. Overslanting. The standard technique of slanted interpretation becomes extreme enough to raise a question of vulnerability in at least four aspects of Soviet propaganda: automatic shifting of implicit assumptions; slanted paraphrase (which is much more frequent than outright misquotation); omitting the context; and "diabolism."

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I. STANDARD TECHNIQUES

A. UNITY AND SIMPLICITY OF BASIC THEME-CONTENT

A basic propaganda principle, succinctly stated by Hitler, is that to be effective "propaganda has to limit itself to a very few points and to use them like slogans until even the very last man is able to imagine what is intended by such a word." Soviet radio propaganda scrupulously adheres to this principle, as far as its basic theme-content is concerned. Practically everything that the Soviet radio says supports in one way or another a single over-all theme: that the world is divided into two opposed and irreconcilable camps, with the Soviet Union and its allies representing all that is good, and the Western "ruling circles" together with their lackeys throughout the world representing all that is evil. The following quotations are typical:

> "A struggle between two camps is going on throughout the world... The anti-imperialist camp of socialism and democracy has never been as strong as it is today. ... Let them (the imperialists) not forget that in the struggle of peoples against the criminal schemes of the imperialist camp, the leading place belongs to the mightiest power in the world, our Soviet Union, champion of the great idea of friendship and fraternity of nations." (24 September 1948, B2*)

> "The Soviet proposals for disarmament and a ban on atomic weapons, so obviously in the interests of mankind, but consistently rejected by the U.S., Britain, and other capitalist governments...." (13 October 1949, A3)

> "The present rulers of the U.S. need this trial (of the Communists) as a pretext for destroying remnants of democracy in the United States. Hitler had to do the same thing. The warmongers are trying to sweep from their path all those who are not in agreement with their program for the enslavement of the world by the American financial magnates." (20 October 1949, I 1)

There are subtleties in Soviet propaganda, but they do not lie in any complexity of the basic ideas which the propagandist tries to establish. There is a minimum of abstract ideological content; the propagandist simply paints a picture of black vs. white, using the deepest black and the purest white.

The simplicity of the psychological processes called for in the listener should also be noticed. The smearing of one camp and the glorification of the other do not call for any psychological process more complicated than ordinary association. In the above quotations, for instance, direct and explicit associations are made between the idea of the Soviet Union and the ideas of anti-imperialism, democracy, strength, friendship, and disarmament; and there are equally direct associations between the "American financial magnates" and imperialism, criminal scheming, refusal to prohibit the atom bomb, destruction of democracy, Hitlerism, warmongering, and enslavement of the world. Neither abstract ideology nor the complexities of practical action are allowed to complicate the picture. Nothing is said here, for instance, about how disarmament is to be effected, or how the ban on atomic weapons is to be enforced, or about the actual issues in the Communist trial.

Another illustration of Moscow's typically simple association of ideas is to be found in the following quotation:

> "The aims of this extensive (military aid) program are clear. Making use of it, Wall Street monopolists hope to keep the production of the American war industries on high levels and to make a profitable sale of the surpluses of war material." (13 October 1949, A 5)

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* The references throughout this report are to the issue of the SURVEY OF USSR RADIO BROADCASTS [redacted], which appeared on the date that is given, and to the page on which the quotation appears.

Here, the ostensibly factual character of the assertion is somewhat more detailed and specific. Yet the essential technique is still simply the enunciation of certain ideas which presumably arouse negative emotions in the listener and the juxtaposition of them with one of the elements of U.S. foreign policy, i.e. the Military Aid Program. In this case, the simple equation is:

"monopolists...war...profits...war" equals MAP.

The use of the label "monopolist" in this example is especially characteristic of the way in which Moscow multiplies enormously the number of emotional associations supporting its own version of the facts. A large part of the emotional impact of Soviet propaganda comes not from the things that are said about the friend or the enemy, but simply from the labels and appelatives used in referring to him; the friends of the Soviet Union are "the forces of peace," "the democratic forces," "the people," while its enemies are "reactionaries," "monopolists," "imperialists." The longer of the two sentences quoted above is typical in that it smears the enemy at least twice, once in the use of the word "monopolists" as the subject of the sentence and once in the war-promoting character of the activity in which the "monopolists" are said to be engaged. And in both cases--but especially the first--it is a matter of simple association and suggestion, rather than any more complicated psychological process. Moscow almost never presents evidence that monopoly is prevalent in the United States or that monopolists control the Government; instead, it relies on the simple and continually recurring use of the word "monopolists" in contexts in which another reporter of the same event would perhaps say "Congress" or "Washington" or "the United States."

In this connection another fact should be underlined. In its treatment of the basic two-camps theme, Moscow does not define its primary enemy as the U.S. per se, but as the American imperialists, warmongers, monopolists, etc., and their "lackeys" throughout the world. Many persons in the United States apparently assume that Soviet propaganda is directed primarily against America as a nation. But this is true only to the extent of frequent appeals to the pride of non-American nations who are allegedly being reduced to impotent subservience--"cannonfodder"-- by the American imperialists. For example:

> "The U.S. plan for an aggressive war is no secret. ... Western Europe must supply the cannonfodder. ... Under the pretext that the atom bomb will not now play a decisive part, it was decided to concentrate mainly on the land forces which are to consist of Frenchmen, Dutchmen, Belgians, Italians, and Germans." (13 October 1949, A 3)

Generally, however, the Soviet propagandists take pains to draw a distinction--a distinction that is often explicit and nearly always at least implicit--between the diabolical "ruling circles" in America and the democratic, peace-loving American "people":

> "The Congress debate on MAP reflects the crisis experienced by the bipartisan bloc--a crisis which is developing under the pressure of the growing dissatisfaction of the American people. This dissatisfaction is assuming an increasing scale both in the United States and in the Marshallized countries. The wall of popular resistance is growing ever higher in the face of the American warmongers and their West-European partners." (13 October 1949, A 5)

And similarly, although the British "ruling circles" are often described as accomplices or vassals of Wall Street, the British "people" are pictured as belonging to the camp of peace and democracy:

> "The British people have experienced the woe of war and do not want to fight. They are a great and honest people. ... Let the British people pronounce judgement; let them condemn those who speak on their behalf and defame their name." (29 September 1949, I 5)

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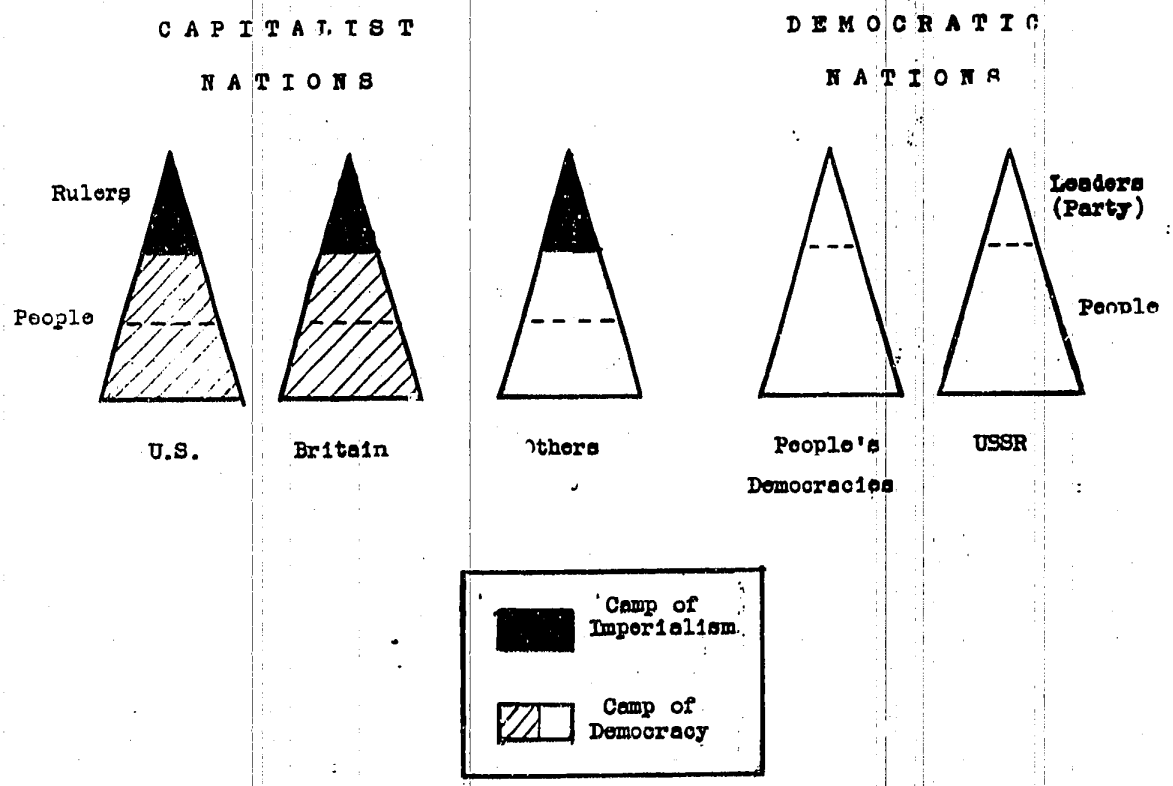
This technique presumably serves two purposes: (a) It takes into account the basic propaganda principle that the audience must be flattered, or at least not directly antagonized. Since almost every radio listener can consider himself as part of "the people" of his country, he need not necessarily take offense at even the bitterest Soviet attack on the policy of his government. According to Moscow, it is not his policy but one that has been adopted in spite of him, with no consideration of his wishes, by those ever-present forces of evil whose power is allegedly guaranteed by the capitalist system. (b) This technique also sustains the basic Soviet appeal to "democracy," the argument being that the USSR and the People's Democracies are not opposing Western Nations as such, but are allying themselves with the "people" in every capitalist nation against their "rulers."

An approximation to these generalizations can be schematically represented by the following diagram.

THE SOVIET "TWO-CAMP" PICTURE

OF THE WORLD



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Five points should be noticed:

(1) The absolute contrast is between the camp of imperialism (the rulers in the West) and the camp of democracy (all the rest of the world).

(2) The chief dividing line between the two camps is not the vertical line separating the capitalist from "democratic" nations, but the horizontal lines separating the rulers in the West from their own peoples and from the "democratic" countries (i.e., those under Communist control).

(3) The overwhelming numerical superiority of the "democratic" camp, as pictured here, is well calculated to buoy up the morale of those who accept this picture by sustaining their belief in the certainty of ultimate victory.

(4) Distinctions within either camp--represented here by broken lines--are extremely vague and as a rule are virtually ignored. The middle classes as well as the workers in the West are implicitly included as part of "the people," and the leaders in the democratic nations (e.g., the Communist Parties) are pictured as united and in intimate touch with their own people.

(5) The areas representing the "people" of the U.S. and Britain are here slightly shaded. This shading is intended to represent the fact that in certain contexts there is condemnation of the policies of these nations as nations, without explicitly excluding the "people" from this condemnation. For example, the nationalism of other capitalist nations, colonial and non-colonial, is appealed to by picturing the threat of "Anglo-American" domination and imperialism. By talking about "the ruling circles in America," Moscow thus kills two birds with one stone: it maintains the distinction between rulers and people, in all the contexts where this distinction is useful; and at the same time it appeals to (and fosters) nationalistic anti-American (and anti-British) sentiment in other parts of the world.

B. DIVERSITY OF SUBTHEMES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

With all of its basic unity, however, Soviet propaganda is not crudely repetitious. It also cultivates up-to-dateness and variety, in the spirit of the advice given by Lenin: "We must blame ourselves for being unable as yet to organize a sufficiently wide, striking and rapid exposure of these despicable outrages. When we do that (and we must and can do it), the most backward worker will understand, or will feel, that the students and religious sects, the muzhiks and the authors are being abused and outraged by the very same dark forces that are oppressing and crushing him at every step of his life.... As yet we have done very little, almost nothing, to hurl universal and fresh exposures among the masses of the workers." (WHAT IS TO BE DONE?, 1902) Similarly, there is now an obvious effort to provide the listener with continually fresh concrete "exposures" of the "despicable outrages" perpetrated by the enemies of the Soviet Union. Interest is maintained by varying the context and by bringing up continually new illustrations, while preserving the essential simplicity of the themes which these "facts" serve to illustrate. The keynote is not repetition as such, but unity-in-diversity.

Lenin's prescription has in fact been elaborated and systematized. There is a pyramidal or ramifying structure of themes and subthemes connecting the over-all two-camps idea with the thousands of specific illustrations. Four levels can be rather clearly distinguished.* At the apex of the structure is the most general statement of the Soviet position: the two-camps picture itself. On the second level of differentiation there are

* These levels are, of course, "constructs" which oversimplify the reality. In practice, the structure is much more complex, with several types of differentiation and an intricate interweaving of themes.

perhaps eight or ten major themes, each having both a positive and a negative aspect, and differentiated from each other on the basis of the major motives or values to which they appeal. For example, corresponding to the desire for peace, there are on this level two aspects of a single major theme: "We stand for peace, while our enemies are instigating war." Other such pairs correspond to the desires for "democracy," for national independence, for economic welfare, etc. On the third level, supporting each of these major themes, there is a considerable number of subthemes. For instance, supporting the major theme that "our enemies are instigating war" there are a number of subthemes made up of more specific claims and charges: "the Atlantic Pact is aggressive"; "they are rearming for aggression"; "they are undermining the United Nations--the bulwark of peace"; "they are remilitarizing Germany"; etc. And on the fourth level, each of these subthemes is illustrated in a variety of contexts consisting of specific topics, events, situations, etc. For instance, condemnation of the Atlantic Pact appears in such forms as these:

> "The People's Democratic Front therefore demands that all parties solemnly pledge to reject under any conditions Italy's adherence to any association, coalition, or bloc which directly or indirectly aims at unleashing war." (16 April 1948, G 4)
>
> "The peoples' struggle against the military bloc is growing, not only in Britain, but also in all the other countries participating in the North Atlantic Bloc." (2 June 1949, A 4)
>
> "Is it Russia who proposes to replace the United Nations by an aggressive military coalition?" (20 May 1949, A 6)
>
> "The so-called Holy Alliance... represented the alliance of European monarchs, exponents of the worst reaction, militarism, and the inhuman oppression of the people.... The organizers of the North Atlantic Pact today are bringing to life under new conditions the same spirit of reaction, war and violence propagated more than a century ago by the alleged Holy Alliance." (6 May 1949, B 5)

Whether the degree of variety is enough to preserve the listener from boredom is a question which obviously could be answered adequately only by a direct study of the reactions of the listeners themselves. The existing degree of variety, however, should not be underestimated. In these quotations (whose variety could be multiplied at length), for example, the Atlantic Pact is discussed in two different national contexts (Italy and Britain), and in conjunction with two other topics (the United Nations and the Holy Alliance). Also--apart from the frequent recurrence of a few key words such as "military" and "aggressive"--the variation of wording is considerable.

The policy of diversity is shown also in the way in which new developments are handled. A major new topic, such as the Marshall Plan, the Atlantic Pact, or currency devaluation, is ordinarily given a great deal of concentrated attention when it first appears in the news. Many commentaries are devoted specifically to it. Then, after a period of weeks, the amount of such concentrated attention typically drops greatly, but simultaneously the new topic is worked into a great variety of specific contexts. The Marshall Plan, for instance, is no longer the subject of many concentrated commentaries, but is repeatedly referred to in discussions of specific countries such as France, Belgium and Italy, as a cause of their economic woes; and the "enslaving" character of the Plan is casually referred to in innumerable contexts as if it were a universally recognized, self-evident fact. The "Marshallized countries," for instance, are referred to as if this expression alone were enough to damn them. By this process of defocalization and dispersion, a fair

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* The process by which a word like "Marshallized" comes into use is reminiscent of a passage from Lenin's WHAT IS TO BE DONE? in which he attacks the uncritical use of certain catch-phrases by his "opportunist" opponents. "Evidently this slogan," he said (criticizing his opponents' use of the phrase, "freedom of criticism"), "is one of the conventional phrases which, like a nickname, become legitimatized by use, and become almost like an appellative."

degree of freshness and diversity in the material is maintained without necessarily decreasing the total emphasis on the topic in question.

C. UNIVERSALITY OF APPEAL

The appeal of Soviet radio propaganda today is not primarily to the working class but to the universal conscience and self-interest of "the peoples" of the world; and it identifies itself not primarily with revolution but with most of those universal or near-universal values which nearly all of its listeners presumably accept: peace, international cooperation, "democracy," national independence, prosperity, economic and social justice, etc. In a sense, therefore, its appeal is not revolutionary, but--psychologically--conservative.

The extent of the change in this respect, since the earlier days of Marxist propaganda, is not always fully appreciated. To bring out the contrast, it will be worth while to recall some earlier statements from the period before the Popular Front (1934-35)--statements of a type which almost never occurs today (at least in broadcasts beamed to foreign audiences):

> "The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions." (COMMUNIST MANIFESTO, 1848)
>
> "The replacement of the bourgeois by the proletarian state is impossible without a violent revolution." (Lenin, STATE AND REVOLUTION, 1917)
>
> "A working class without a revolutionary party is like an army without a General Staff. The Party is the Military Staff of the proletariat." (Stalin, FOUNDATIONS OF LENINISM, 1924)

In place of such candid references to violence, revolution, and military organization, and in place of such frank appeals to the proletariat as a class, we now have such universal appeals as the following:

> Peace. "Who understands the full value of peace better than the Soviet citizens? Who hates war more deeply? ... We won the war because we hate war, and after winning it we joyfully replaced the military communiques with modest reports about the sugar-beet harvest, the production of saucepans, and preparations for the school year." (Ehrenburg, 6 October 1949, B 2)
>
> Democracy. "The workers of France demand a government of democratic unity. ... The pressure by the masses has forced the resignation of Queuille, who had carried out the policy contrary to the people's interest. The French people say the same to Mayer as to Jules Moch--'Away with you.'" (27 October 1949, G 1)
>
> National Independence. "Soviet public opinion does not doubt that sufficient force will be found in the Yugoslav peoples for regaining once more their independence, and for occupying a worthy place in the camp of peace and democracy headed by the USSR." (6 October 1949, D 1)

For a systematic presentation and illustration of the "universal" values to which Moscow now appeals, the reader is referred to the FBIS report on the content of Soviet radio propaganda (see above, p. 1). It may be noted here, however, that the three quotations given above are typical in several respects: (1) They do not argue for revolution, nor even--explicitly--for socialism. (2) They do not use the word "class," or draw explicitly any class lines whatsoever. (3) The connotations which Soviet propaganda gives to the word "democracy" include hostility to a small exploiting minority, most frequently described as "ruling circles" or "monopolists." There is here an implicit drawing of a class line, but it is definitely not between proletariat and petit bourgeoisie; it is between "the people" (implicitly including all middle class

An especially striking illustration of this moral emphasis is the way in which Moscow handles the topic of military power. It almost never discusses Soviet military power specifically, or in a way which could clearly be interpreted as threatening or intimidating its neighbors. The lack of specific military discussion could be attributed to the general Soviet policy of secrecy, but the relative infrequency of even vague statements extolling Soviet power calls for some further explanation. In this respect, some persons in the United States have made erroneous predictions--perhaps because of assuming that Soviet peacetime propaganda, like Nazi wartime propaganda, would automatically "capitalize on" any opportunity to advertize its own military strength. For instance, at the time of President Truman's announcement of Soviet possession of the atomic bomb, some persons in America predicted that Moscow would capitalize on its possession of the new weapon to strike fear into its Western neighbors. Actually the treatment of this development was, like most of the previous Soviet discussion of the atomic bomb, extremely cautious, modest in volume, and wholly subordinated to a new emphasis on the Soviet desire for peace. Ehrenburg's statement that "from Moscow to Philadelphia it is as far as from Philadelphia to Moscow"--a statement quoted by the American press--was much more nearly an open threat than anything else in Soviet radio propaganda; and even this statement, when seen in its complete context (which included an especially idyllic image of peace) could hardly have suggested a threat of Soviet aggression. Similarly, it is a very striking fact that the undoubted superiority of Soviet land forces as compared with those in Western Europe has almost never been "capitalized on" in any way by the Soviet radio; Moscow never conjures up an image of a Red juggernaut rolling across Germany and France, even in response to Western "aggression" by air against Soviet cities.

A clue to the Soviet reasoning on this matter is provided by the fact that Moscow has occasionally in the past accused the Western warmongers of "brandishing" the atom bomb and using it to "blackmail" the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies. A recent evocation of the same picture is the following:

> "When we speak of peace, it is not because... we are afraid of the threats of the British and American bourgeois who now menacingly brandish their weapons but, when the shooting starts, will be eager to press them into other hands, the hands of Negroes, Frenchmen, or Germans...." (13 October 1949, A 5)

Since Moscow goes out of its way to detect a "brandishing" of weapons by its enemies, it may well be anxious not to lay itself open to the charge of "brandishing" the Red Army. It may reason that foregoing a chance to enhance Soviet military prestige is (at least in time of peace) a price well worth paying in order to preserve intact the propaganda image of the Soviet Union as a peaceloving, non-aggressive, highly moral nation.

EFFORT TO APPEAR OBJECTIVE

A basic and complex characteristic of effective propaganda (though one which has only rarely been discussed in detail) is that in a certain sense it must appear to be objective. In the case of any propaganda as inherently belligerent as that of the Soviet Union there is of course a need to define carefully the kind of "appearance of objectivity" which it cultivates. Certainly it does not try to appear neutral or undecided in the great world struggle between Right and Wrong. The impression it tries to create is, rather, that the world struggle is between Right and Wrong, and that any soberly clear-headed and truthful person would necessarily see it and describe it in that way.

Some of the indications of this effort are:

1. Unemotional Tone of Voice: Several listeners have noted that Moscow's news broadcasts and commentaries are as a rule not given in an emotional "soapbox oratory" style. The manner of the commentator is confident and definite but not excited.

2. Seemingly Factual Emphasis: There is much news, and the commentaries also contain much presumably factual material. The impression given is that "this happened" or "this is true"--not that "I say this" or "our position is that."

3. Self-Effacement of Commentators: Apart from commentaries by Ilya Ehrenburg and an occasional anonymous satirical piece (such as the extraordinary "fable of Santa Claus" which appeared on Christmas Day, 1948), there is a marked uniformity in the style of Soviet commentators and the articles quoted by the Soviet radio. The pronoun "I" is very rare. In general, the listener is not reminded of the existence of the human medium through which he sees The Truth.

4. Frequent Phrases Suggesting the "Obviousness" of the Soviet Version of the Facts: "As is known...," "the whole world knows...," "needless to say...," "there can no longer be any doubt...," "no one even tried to deny..."--such phrases are innumerable. For example:

> "The whole world follows now with emotion the speeches of the representatives of the Soviet Union, Belorussia, the Ukraine, and Poland at the U.N. General Assembly in defense of the victims of monarcho-fascist terrorism. Vishinsky in his first speeches at the last U.N. session drew attention to monarchist-fascist terrorism in Greece, and suggested that the U.N. should take the necessary steps for the cessation of terrorism in Greece." (13 October 1949, E 2)

This quotation illustrates at several points the rather subtle devices used to create an impression of obviousness. It is not only that the horrible facts are assumed to be so obvious that the "whole world" feels the same emotion when the facts are described. There is also the fact that Vishinsky "drew attention." He did not need to "claim" or to "prove"--or so this commentary seems to suggest. All he needed to do was to "draw attention." Similarly, the steps he "suggested" were "the necessary" steps. He did not claim or urge that they were necessary; they were simply "the necessary" steps. It is implied that their necessity was as self-evident a fact as the "monarcho-fascist terrorism" itself.

5. Avoidance of Obvious Lying: Truthfulness and objectivity are not identical, but they both imply that the picture presented is a true one. It is therefore pertinent to note that--contrary to the impressions of some persons in America--the Soviet radio clearly takes pains to avoid obvious lying. The out-and-out lies that are obvious enough to be spotted by the ordinary newspaper reader are few and far between. Even though the number of actual out-and-out lies is probably somewhat larger than this, it is doubtful whether they represent the larger part of the distortion that occurs; both selection and slanted interpretation are probably far more important.

6. Consistency, i.e., not contradicting to one audience what is said to another. Another misconception of the nature of Soviet propaganda is that it often lays itself open to clear proofs of inconsistency by saying contradictory things to different audiences. There are great differences of emphasis on some points in broadcasts beamed to different areas, but in general these do not represent actual self-contradiction. For example, the theme of German unity, which is greatly stressed in broadcasts to Germany, is soft-pedalled in broadcasts to France; yet Moscow has never said to Frenchmen that it does not favor German unity.

7. Avoiding Predictions That Might Not Come True: For example, in discussing the "Western economic crisis" Moscow has not made specific predictions as to when the full-blown "crisis" would materialize.

8. Enormous Emphasis on the Lying and Hypocrisy of the Enemy: Moscow does not often explicitly boast of its own truthfulness or objectivity, but it is continually attempting to smear its opponents on this score, with the implication that what the Soviet radio says is, by contrast, the sober and unvarnished truth. For instance:

> "He (Acheson) made laughable assertions that the Bonn 'Government' had allegedly been created on a truly constitutional basis." (20 October 1949, B 2)

> "U.S. newspapers, whether Democratic or Republican, are all alike, for they can always be relied upon to publish the same lies." (22 September 1949, I 2)

> The Point Four program "entails a poorly camouflaged plan for the colonization and total subjugation... of countries too weak to resist the expansion of U.S. monopolies." (29 September 1949, A 4)

9. Few Direct Appeals to Action or to Emotion: If the horrible facts create fear or anger in the listener, then that is his business; the business of the commentator is simply to describe The Facts. Such, at least, is the impression the Soviet commentator conveys. Radio Moscow very rarely makes statements in the imperative rather than the descriptive form; it does not say "Arise, ye prisoners of starvation!" Ostensibly, it merely describes the "starvation" and leaves to the prisoners the decision as to whether they should "arise." Nor are there many direct appeals to emotion; for example, with two or three exceptions, there have been no monitored instances of explicitly glorifying hate.

10. A Medium--Not a Low--Intellectual Level: In content, Soviet propaganda follows Hitler's principle that "propaganda... has to adapt its spiritual level to the perception of the least intelligent of those towards whom it intends to direct itself." In form, however, the Soviet radio does not give the impression of talking down to its listeners. In vocabulary and in sentence length, for example, it represents a medium rather than a low intellectual level. This combination of a basically simple black-white propaganda content with a somewhat dignified and even occasionally a scholarly-sounding form is well illustrated by the following passage:

> "The victory of Chinese democracy has been prepared by the whole course of historic development. The Great October Socialist Revolution signified a cardinal turn in the history of mankind, undermined the power of imperialism in colonial and dependent countries, awakened the oppressed masses in the Far East, and opened a new chapter in their struggle for liberation. ... The existence of the Socialist Soviet State in the neighborhood of China, its mighty development, its revolutionary experience and its fraternal solidarity were facilitating and inspiring the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal struggle of the Chinese working masses." (13 October 1949, I 2; quoted from PRAVDA)

This passage represents approximately the upper limit of "intellectuality" in present-day Soviet broadcasts. In its use of such expressions as "historic development," "cardinal turn," "colonial and dependent," "facilitating," and "anti-feudal" (as well as in its frank use of the word "revolution") it is mildly reminiscent of the more scholarly writings of Marx, Engels and Lenin. Yet it is not very different in this respect from the average or the least "intellectual" of Soviet broadcasts; the fact is that they are rather homogeneous in their level of apparent intellectuality, seldom deviating much either above or below the medium level which is apparently considered appropriate. (And as far as content goes, they are equally constant in their extreme simplicity. This passage deals in high-sounding generalities without defining "democracy," without specifying how "imperialism" has "oppressed" the masses in the Far East, and without differentiating in any way between the present social and cultural conditions in China and those of Russia in 1917. And, like this passage, nearly all Soviet broadcasts are on a homogeneously low level of actual intellectuality.)

E. SELECTION AND OMISSION

While the Soviet radio does not often resort to obvious lying, it continually resorts to two other standard propaganda techniques which depart from strict objectivity: selection (which always implies omission of, or underemphasis on, certain parts of the total picture), and slanted interpretation. In later sections we will consider certain ways in which Moscow carries both techniques to an extreme which perhaps defeats its own end by making the techniques as such more vulnerable to counter-propaganda. The basic techniques themselves, however, could scarcely be effectively criticized; they are the necessary, taken-for-granted characteristics of all effective propaganda. For example, examination of a single issue of the SURVEY OF USSR RADIO BROADCASTS (20 October 1949; see especially p. v) brings out the following types of omission, some of which are absolute and some only relative to the amount of attention given to the same topics by a relatively inclusive news source such as the NEW YORK TIMES.

1. Areas of Defeat: For example, current Communist setbacks in Greece and in the Austrian elections were ignored or given slight attention. Similarly, current evidences that the Western economic situation is not one of acute "crisis" were ignored; and specific evidences

of Western rearmament and increasing military strength were discussed only very broadly, in a moral context, as evidences of Western militarism.

2. Areas of Moral Vulnerability: The State-Church struggle and the mass arrests in Czechoslovakia were ignored. Western charges of violation of civil rights, in the USSR and its Satellites, were ignored or evasively handled. The trial of top Communists in the U.S. was capitalized on as evidence of American fascism, but without discussion of the actual issues involved, such as Communist readiness to use force and violence. The question of world control of atomic energy was given little stress, and was handled with the evasiveness that has characterized Soviet treatment of this issue since the beginning.

3. Irrelevant Conflicts: The two above-mentioned types of omission could have been easily predicted on the basis of common-sense assumptions about the nature of propaganda. There is a third major type of omission, however, which could not have been so readily anticipated: the general (though not universal) policy of ignoring or minimizing all conflicts other than the one great two-camps conflict between imperialism and democracy. Emphasis on the one great cleavage is maintained partly by not allowing the listener to be distracted by other cleavages. One illustration of this policy is the very slight attention given to the differences between Republicans and Democrats in the United States, and to their contest in the presidential elections of 1948. Moscow gave perhaps forty or fifty times as much attention to the Soviet-sponsored Paris Peace Congress in April 1949 as it had given to the American election of the previous fall (apart from Wallace's part in this election, and the alleged persecution of his followers). Similarly, the British Labor and Conservative Parties are treated as virtually identical.

In the SURVEY of 20 October 1949, this policy was represented by at least three major avoidances: the Navy-vs.-Air-Force conflict, which was currently dominating the headlines in the American press; the coal and steel strikes in America; and the persistent conflict in Palestine between Jews and Arabs. One might perhaps have supposed that at least the coal and steel strikes would have been vigorously "capitalized" by Moscow as evidences of labor unrest and class conflict in the U.S. The avoidance is understandable, however, in view of the fact that both Murray and Lewis are in Moscow's ideology mere lackeys of Wall Street; it would have been difficult to depict this conflict as coinciding with the particular cleavage which Moscow considers crucial.

The one major exception to this policy is the fairly frequent playing up of "contradictions" within the capitalist world, and especially rivalry between Britain and the United States. There is a real paradox here. The Soviet radio is torn between two propaganda advantages: the advantage of minimizing all differences except the major one; and the advantage of showing that the enemy is disunited and therefore weak. The conflict between the two tendencies is especially clear in the case of the treatment of Anglo-American relationships; there is a vacillation between treating "Anglo-American imperialism" as a single entity and playing up real or alleged rivalry between the two powers, especially in the Middle East.

4. Non-Commitment: A fourth possible type of omission should be mentioned for the sake of completeness: concrete issues on which the Soviet Government has not yet taken a firm official stand, or has not fully clarified its position. It is understandable that the Soviet Government should not want its propaganda arm to commit it in advance on issues, or aspects of issues, relative to which it wants a free hand for negotiation and bargaining. The remarkably small propaganda investment in the Berlin situation during most of the airlift period is perhaps a case in point; the Soviet blockade itself was virtually ignored by Moscow, so that when it was lifted there was relatively little loss of face. The avoidance of the concrete issues involved in the Austrian treaty is perhaps another illustration.

In place of all these avoided topics or sub-topics, the Soviet radio concentrates, day in and day out, on those events or those propagandistic generalizations (such as the aggressive character of the Atlantic Pact) which most directly support its own two-camps picture of the world. For example, to take a single example, it freely makes use of quotations

which support its position, preferring (when they are available) quotations from persons who cannot be accused of Communist bias. A typical way of introducing such quotations is to say, for instance, that "even such a reactionary as Senator Taft" points to the weaknesses of the military aid program.

F. SLANTED INTERPRETATION

The other "standard" and basic Soviet technique of distortion is slanted interpretation.

Perhaps the most interesting thing about Moscow's slanted interpretations is their explicitness. As we have pointed out, the action-implications of the material are not spelled out. All other implications, however, are, as a rule, fully explicit. The goodness or badness of an action, for instance, is made abundantly clear. On such points there is no effort to give the listener the feeling that he is being allowed to draw his own conclusions from the facts. Rather, the impression is given that the interpretations which need to be drawn are a wholly obvious aspect of the facts themselves. The Soviet propagandists do not appear to assume, like some other propagandists, that objectivity (or the appearance of objectivity) implies an absence of explicit interpretation; their apparent assumption is that fact and interpretation are inseparable. For example:

> "Having the electors in mind, a number of Senators (who criticized the military aid program) do not wish to connect their fate with the aggressive cause of the White House." (13 October 1949, A 5)

> "In Italy, M. Moch has heart-to-heart talks with his Rome counterpart, Scelba, whose coattails are also stained with the blood of innocent victims." (20 October 1949, G 2)

Each of these items has the appearance of factual description; each of them makes fully explicit a highly controversial interpretation of events; and each presents the interpretation as if it had the same obvious, factual character as the tangible facts which are referred to. In the case of the Senators who criticized MAP, two elements of interpretation are unobtrusively introduced: the motive for their criticism (fear of the "electors") and the "aggressive" character of the policy of the White House. It is also clearly implied that this "aggressiveness" is obvious to the "electors." In the second case the essential controversial interpretation is introduced unobtrusively with the word "innocent" as applied to "victims," and this interpretation is treated as if it has the same factual character as the Moch-Scelba conversations which represent the starting-point of the item. Moscow does not say "Moch talked with Scelba, whom democratic elements in Italy accuse of murdering innocent victims." To put it in such a way would have withdrawn the halo of factualness and obviousness from the "innocence" of the victims, which was the essential propaganda point that needed to be established; it would have encouraged the listener to separate fact and interpretation, and perhaps to challenge the interpretation while accepting the fact. But--to judge by its consistent policy--that is exactly what Moscow does not want its listeners to do.

Other illustrations of the technique could be multiplied indefinitely. One of the omnipresent forms of it, for instance, is the use of verbs, as well as nouns, which imply the major themes of the Soviet propaganda line. The use of nouns such as "monopolists" and "people" has already been illustrated. Some of the most well-worked verbs which serve a similar function are "admits," "unmasks," and "demands." At the time of devaluation Cripps "admitted" that the price of bread would rise--implying that he would normally try to conceal such a fact, but that in this case concealment was impossible. Vishinsky and others are continually "unmasking" the warmongers--implying that they are sinister hypocrites as well as instigators of war. The U.S. "demands" British devaluation--implying that Britain has been reduced to the status of a vassal of Wall Street. Similarly, France does not agree to U.S. proposals, it "submits" to U.S. "orders"; Sforza does not talk with U.S. representatives, he is "summoned" to talk with them; American military leaders do not ask for European assistance, they want to "compel" the French, Italians and others to "pull their chestnuts out of the fire." Adjectives and adverbs too are continually pressed into service. "Allegedly" is a prime favorite; e.g., when Westerners speak of possible Soviet aggression, this is "a loud noise of an imaginary danger allegedly threatening." "Obedient" is also a favorite; when the Soviet delegation is out-voted in the U.N., the majority is typically an "obedient" majority, obedient to the "dictates" of the Wall Street monopolists. When translated into such terms, there is hardly a political event on the face of the globe that cannot be described in such a way as to support the Soviet propaganda picture.

II. MORE VULNERABLE CHARACTERISTICS

A. EVASION OF KEY ISSUES

The selection or "cardstacking" which is described above involves an avoidance of certain key issues--an avoidance which in some cases is extreme enough to raise a question of whether an opponent might make propaganda capital by exposing the evasions as such. Some of the major issues evaded in this way are:

1. Individual Freedom in the Soviet Sphere: Recent Western charges have brought about some consideration of this issue, but the typical reply is to charge "slavery" in the West rather than to attempt a direct defense of Soviet and Satellite practices. For instance, in reply to charges of forced labor in the USSR, we find the following:

> "The nature of this galley-slave work (in Britain) can be judged by the fact that nobody is prepared to go voluntarily into the mines, although there are 400,000 unemployed in Britain. The manpower in the mines is supplemented by sending demobilized soldiers compulsorily into the pits, by recruiting white slaves among the ranks of the so-called DP's, and by setting common criminals to work. This, then, is the much-vaunted freedom of labor in present-day Britain." (4 August 1949, I 7)

Western charges in the U.N. with regard to violations of human rights in Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria have been met chiefly by accusations that the sovereignty of these countries is being attacked, and by reiteration of official accusations against Mindszenty, Rajk, and others, as if the truth of these accusations were self-evident. The right to deal sternly with "fascists" and spies is stoutly maintained. And similarly, on the very rare occasions when "the Soviet corrective labor system" is specifically described, it is discussed only in terms of the treatment of "criminals," and the treatment itself is described as much more humane than the treatment of criminals in the West. On the equally rare occasions when free speech and freedom of the press in the USSR are discussed, there is a repetition of the official thesis that the press is freer in the USSR than elsewhere, because all groups are given not only freedom but also paper and printing presses--which workers in the West cannot afford. The methods of Party control are never discussed in this context, nor is there ever a discussion of what constitutes political "criminality."

2. The Implementation of Atomic-Energy Control: The way in which the concrete issues of atomic-energy control have been evaded--without seeming to evade them--represents one of the subtlest aspects of Soviet propaganda technique. Both before and after President Truman's announcement of Soviet possession of the bomb, Moscow pictured its own campaign for prohibition of atomic weapons as "clear and concrete," in contrast to the evasive technicalities of its opponents; yet it has consistently tended to avoid any real discussion of the actual points at issue: the nature of adequate inspection, international ownership and management of atomic energy facilities as distinguished from mere inspection, the veto, etc. There has also been (with certain notable exceptions) a systematic soft-pedalling of the whole issue, giving it just enough attention so that, in all probability, few listeners are aware that the soft-pedalling has existed at all. The Soviet campaign to "ban the bomb" has been strongly emphasized only at those particular times (the fall of 1948, and again more briefly and mildly in the fall of 1949) when world attention would have been concentrated on this issue in any case. At these times some Soviet initiative was clearly called for as a defensive counter-attack, balancing and distracting attention from Western charges of Soviet obstructionism. (For more detailed discussion of this complex topic, see the SURVEY OF USSR RADIO BROADCASTS, especially 2 April 1948, pp. J 1-3; 26 November 1948, pp. A 1-2; 13 October 1949, pp. A 1-2.)

3. Western Fear of Soviet Aggression, and the Historical Basis of That Fear: In any discussion of Western "militarism" or of the Atlantic Pact, the fear of Soviet aggression which has caused these developments is ordinarily ignored; and the result

is that the Soviet interpretation of them as purely aggressi appears as the only possible explanation. On the rare occasions when Western references to Soviet aggression are mentioned at all, such references are dismissed as palpably dishonest propaganda; they are "a loud noise of an imaginary danger allegedly threatening." Another example:

> "Time and again Spaak spoke in a hysterical manner. Thus, turning to the Soviet delegation, he declared that the position of the Western Powers were based on fear...of the USSR. 'We feel you,' Spaak exclaimed, 'on the frontiers of the Rhine, and we are afraid.' It was easy, however, to understand that these theatrical tricks were needed for the very definite purpose of producing an impression upon the representatives of the yellow press, who feverishly recorded Spaak's yelling." (1 October 1948, A 7)

At the same time, there is almost never any defense of the numerous historical episodes which are often interpreted in the West as instances of Soviet aggression. The Finnish war, for instance, and the ways in which Soviet control of the Satellites was established after "liberation" are almost never discussed. And the same blackout exists (with rare exceptions) for the whole period of the Nazi-Soviet Pact.

4. Direct Economic Comparisons Between East and West: When Soviet figures are given, they are compared with other Soviet figures, showing remarkable progress; when Western figures are given they are compared with other Western figures, showing decline or stagnation. Soviet and Western figures are rarely, if ever, directly compared. It is rarely if ever stated in so many words--though it is often vaguely implied--that the workers' standard of living is higher in the Soviet Union than in the West. Social services and the absence of unemployment in the USSR are discussed, but there are no direct comparisons between the daily life of a Soviet worker (the kind of clothes he puts on in the morning, the kind of food he has for breakfast, the kind of house he lives in, etc.) and the daily life of workers elsewhere. The Soviet radio does not admit a lower living standard and then defend it on the ground of Russia's initial backwardness, World War I, civil war, and World War II. Instead, it simply avoids the issue.

5. The Role of the USSR (and the Communist Parties) in the Satellites: It is always blandly assumed that the Satellites are not only democratic in every sense of the word but also wholly sovereign and independent. The two crucial questions--the question of whether these countries are dominated by Communist Parties, and the further question of whether these Communist Parties are dominated by Moscow--are not recognized even as questions existing in the minds of Western critics. Western charges in this respect are vaguely referred to (if mentioned at all) only as "baseless slanders" against the "People's Democracies."

6. Differences Between Soviet and Western Meanings of "Democracy": As far as emphasis goes, there are two fairly clear differences between the Soviet definition of "democracy" and the Western definition of it, both of which are inferable from the nature of the contexts in which the Soviet radio uses the word. (a) The very small Soviet emphasis on individual freedom--even on the propaganda level--suggests that this essential component of Western conceptions of democracy is not important in the minds of Soviet propagandists. (b) The word "democracy" is used as if it were synonymous with class justice; for example, "the camp of democracy" is often contrasted with "the camp of reaction," as if the opposite of reaction were necessarily democratic. This suggests that in Soviet minds "democracy" connotes government for the people--i.e., for the common people, the workers--much more than it connotes government by the people. Majority rule as such is seldom if ever discussed.

The vagueness of the Soviet radio on ideological issues is well illustrated, however, by the fact that these differences have never been made explicit. Moscow has never said "class justice is more important than free speech or majority rule." Instead, the absoluteness of the two-camps dichotomy is maintained even here; it is never admitted

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or a moment that the West places more emphasis on free speech or on majority rule than the oviet Union does. The word "democracy" is treated as if it had a single clear and transarent meaning, which is violated in every respect by the "ruling circles" in the West. or instance:

"Trying to make a joke of it, Bevin said that one should appoint a special number of Ministers' Deputies in order to establish what 'democracy' and 'sovereignty' were. Bevin's joke, however, failed to hit the mark. It is well known that the U.S. and British reactionary press have recently on many occasions been trying to assert in all seriousness that the conceptions of democracy and sovereignty were 'vague,' unclear, and lent themselves to different interpretations. Is it befitting, however, for a Labor Minister to make such remarks?" (5 December 1947, A 4-5)

AVOIDANCE OF BASIC BOLSHEVIK DOCTRINE

was pointed out above that present-day Soviet propaganda is characterized by a "universality appeal" which strongly contrasts with the earlier and more candid revolutionary appeals the proletariat as such. There are Western writers who do not take the change at its ce value. "Historicus," for example, concludes that "the Marxist doctrine to which he talin) is committed is uncompromisingly revolutionary."* It is therefore legitimate to ppose that the soft-pedalling of the older doctrines is primarily propagandistic in ture, and that it is designed to minimize the opposition of two non-revolutionary groups:) democratic socialists who share the desire for socialism but who oppose the violent d undemocratic methods of class or Party dictatorship; and (b) non-socialist elements-- rhaps chiefly in the middle or white collar classes--who can be appealed to in terms of ace, democracy, national independence, etc.

though the shrewdness of this strategy seems evident, it would seem to be also a culiarly vulnerable one, since it could be exposed by the simple device of quoting earlier atements by Lenin and Stalin (still current and taught in the USSR), and by pointing to e present infrequency of similar statements. A direct self-contradiction could not be aimed, since the Soviet radio does not (as Stalin did in his 1936 interview with Roy ward) make any statements that appear to deny directly the revolutionary aims of interional Communism. Here, as in many other instances, Soviet inconsistency is primarily matter of differences of emphasis rather than of outright self-contradiction. But the fference of emphasis is in this case so great that it might be relatively easy to demonrate it to a non-revolutionary Western radio listener who was familiar with the current viet line and who, if confronted with the earlier line, would probably find it both familiar and disturbing.

ree illustrations of the older line have already been given (p.6). Surveying now more tematically the types of older statement which are now relatively rare, we can say t they include:

(a) The words "revolution" and "revolutionary."

(b) The phrase "dictatorship of the proletariat." Although recently somewhat revived on the Satellite beams and occasionally mentioned in Home Service broadcasts, this phrase is extremely rare in Moscow's regular foreign broadcasts; and the rarity is the more striking when compared with the central importance of proletarian dictatorship in, for example, Stalin's "Problems of Leninism." The single word "dictatorship" is of course wholly out of key with the current Soviet stress on "democracy," even though, in the Soviet ideology, it does not by any means imply a one-man dictatorship. And, in addition, there is the demonstrable fact that it does imply an exclusion from the "dictatorship" of middle class and peasant groups, some of whom are perhaps not now aware of how definitely they could be excluded from at least the initial stages of Soviet "democracy."

(c) Other class concepts, such as bourgeoisie and petit bourgeoisie.

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(d) The concept of "iron discipline" within the Party. For instance: "Whoever in the least weakens the iron discipline of the party of the proletariat (especially during its dictatorship) actually aids the bourgeoisie against the proletariat." (Stalin, quoting Lenin; in FOUNDATIONS OF LENINISM, 1924)

(e) The earlier outspoken challenge to existing property rights; "abolition of private property."

(f) The challenge to religion; religion is "the opium of the people."

(g) The challenge to patriotism; "the working men have no country."

(h) The challenge to parliamentary democracy; "disrupting parliamentarism from within."

(i) The frank acceptance of violence; "force is the midwife of every old society which is pregnant with the new."

C. UNSUPPORTED DOGMATISM

The air of absolute certainty which characterizes most of Moscow's assertions stands in striking contrast with the frequent absence of facts supporting those assertions. And in this contrast there may lie another major weak spot in Moscow's propaganda armor.

The contrast is not necessarily immediately apparent. As has been pointed out, Soviet propaganda gives an impression of factualness. It is factual, however, only in the sense that it regularly uses news items as pegs on which to hang its propaganda themes. It is not factual in the sense that it supports these themes themselves with any systematic presentation of data; rather, the themes ordinarily appear in the slanted wording of the "factual" item itself, or in the form of generalizations which are presented as if they were so obvious as not to need factual support. For instance:

"Not one of those who took part in the debate even tried to deny the facts showing the interference of the U.S. and Great Britain in Greek affairs." (17 October 1947, E 2)

"It is incumbent on the aforementioned states (Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria) to wage a struggle against organizations of a fascist type and other organizations which aim at depriving the people of their democratic rights." (20 October 1949, A 2)

The factual pegs on which these two items hang are discussions in the United Nations; but the essential conclusions which are drawn--Anglo-American "interference" in Greece and the "fascist" character of those who have been liquidated by the Satellite governments--are not supported by any facts whatever.

It can be contended that this technique represents one of the strongest aspects of Moscow's propaganda approach. Statements such as those quoted above probably convey a very strong impression--at least in the minds of uncritical listeners--that the Soviet generalizations are in fact wholly obvious and not in need of any factual support. The technique also has the advantage that it makes no demands upon the intelligence of the listener; the speaker caters to the mental inertia of the listener by not asking him to weigh or assemble facts. For listeners who are already more or less committed to the Soviet version of events and receptive to Soviet interpretations, it may well be that unsupported dogmatism is much more effective than an approach which, by attempting proof, might seem to cast doubt on what is "self-evident." But it could also be contended that, in the minds of uncommitted listeners, such dogmatism is vulnerable. While initially effective even with such listeners, it may in the long run be vulnerable to counterattack by a propaganda opponent who makes contrary statements with equal confidence, who supports them with abundant facts systematically presented, and who repeatedly challenges the dogmatist to do the same.

D. BLURRING OF DISTINCTIONS

To force the infinitely complicated real world into a crudely simple two-camps ideology involves ignoring or denying many distinctions which are in fact fairly obvious. It

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involves, for instance, ignoring or denying the difference between capitalists and socialists--a distinction which lies at the heart of Marxism itself, considered as a social ideology--whenever this distinction does not coincide with the line that the Soviet Government draws between those who are subservient to it and those who are not. In Soviet propaganda we therefore get such strange bedfellows as Wall Street and Tito, Churchill and Bevin, De Gaulle and Blum, Hitler and Schumacher, NAM and CIO. All, according to Moscow, are "reactionary." Philip Murray and Norman Thomas, as well as Tito, Bevin, and many others who are ordinarily considered as socialists or representatives of labor, have all been depicted by Moscow as "lackeys" of Wall Street.

One aspect of this tendency has already been discussed as an illustration of the general Soviet policy of ignoring "irrelevant conflicts." If it manifested itself only by giving slight attention to "irrelevant" conflicts (such as the election contest between Truman and Dewey), the technique could hardly be called a vulnerable one. If such a distribution of emphasis were "exposed" in the eyes of an ordinary radio listener, he would scarcely consider it very heinous; he might presumably grant to Moscow the privilege of emphasizing what it considers important. But the question of vulnerability can definitely be raised when Moscow passes from ignoring to an outright denial of the differences between, for example, Wall Street and Tito. And such outright denials do often occur. For instance:

> "This trip" (Tito's proposed trip to Paris and London) "is being organized by the U.S. intelligence service in Europe on direct orders from Washington, which has decided to exhibit the Yugoslav Marshal to the European peoples." (20 October 1949, D 1)
>
> "No sooner were the elections over (in Norway) before the labor leaders cast off the cloak they had adorned themselves with during the election campaign." (20 October 1949, E 1)
>
> "The most varied reactionary groupings in the U.S. and Europe, such as Churchill, Hoover, Norman Thomas, Leon Blum, and other right-wing Socialists are grouping together." (30 April 1948, A 3)

There are also other ways in which the blurring of important distinctions, within either the black camp or the white camp, helps to maintain the simplicity and inclusiveness of the black-white contrast. For example, the perfection already achieved by both the USSR and the People's Democracies is not marred by drawing any clear distinction between the nature of a "People's Democracy" and the socialism of the USSR. Nor is the socialism of the USSR allowed to seem imperfect by comparison with a subsequent Communist stage of development; the expression "progress toward Communism," or "marching toward Communism" is used, but without clarifying the nature of the Communism toward which the USSR is marching--whether, for example, it will actually mean "from each according to his ability and to each according to his need," and whether it will include the "withering away of the state."

And, on the black side of the great divide, some of the other blurred distinctions are:

(a) Between being anti-Soviet and being ready to wage aggressive war against the Soviet Union. For instance, "admissions" in the Western press that the Atlantic Pact is "directed against" the USSR are taken as proof that the pact is "aggressive" in nature--ignoring the distinction between fear of Soviet aggression and desire to provoke war.

(b) Between opposing the "unanimity principle" (i.e., the Soviet veto) and opposing international "unity" or cooperation. The verbal similarity between "unity" and "unanimity," and also between "unanimity" and "unanimity principle" has been skillfully utilized to make opponents of the veto appear as opponents of the very spirit of international cooperation.

(c) Between "military" and "aggressive." For instance: "The revival of military unions of a similar character (to that of the Axis) is very dangerous for the cause of peace. It is characteristic that Bizonia is becoming the main arsenal of the

military unions of Western Powers." (17 December 1948, B 1)

(d) Between appeasing Hitler and deliberately "unleashing war." The Munich period is handled with a suppression of all evidence that Chamberlain and Daladier were afraid of war itself, and the result is that they are made to appear as willing accomplices rather than victims of Hitler. (For further description of the rather complex propaganda techniques used in the Soviet reinterpretation of recent history, see the SURVEY OF USSR RADIO BROADCASTS, especially 13 February 1948, pp. A 5-9; 20 February 1948, pp. A 1-2; 16 April 1948, pp. B 1-4. These issues of the SURVEY describe the "battle of the documents" which began with the State Department's publication of documents on Nazi-Soviet relationships.)

E. "SLIDE-IN"

Coupled with this blurring of distinctions there is often a particular sequence which adds greatly to the effectiveness of the blurring: an acceptable idea is followed by a less acceptable one, with an unobtrusive shift in wording such that the unwary listener may not realize that he is being led farther and farther away from his starting point. We have already pointed out the particular kind of "blurred distinction" which consists in treating an interpretation as if it were an integral part of the "fact" which is being described. The illustrations given at that point also illustrate the "slide-in" device which is now being considered. The listener is ordinarily presented first with a "fact"--probably a true fact, or at least something that sounds like a fact, which he can accept in a relatively passive, uncritical frame of mind. With no change of pace, the propagandist then casually brings in a highly slanted interpretation, in such a way that the listener who is not on his guard naturally carries over to the interpretation the same uncritical attitude which he had adopted toward the "fact." For instance:

"In Colombia, as in all the other Latin American countries, the hand of the United States is not far away; the Colombian newspaper EL TIEMPO discloses the smuggling of arms from the United States both by sea and land. In view of the increase of the democratic movement throughout the Latin American continent, the American imperialists can maintain their domination only by helping to set up reactionary and pro-fascist regimes. Such a process is now taking place in Colombia." (17 November 1949, H 4)

Here the initial statement that "the hand of the United States is not far away," whether true or not, is at least plausible from the standpoint of many listeners. The reference to the smuggling of arms is perhaps only a little less plausible; it purports to be a factual statement on a subject about which the listener cannot claim any contrary knowledge. Then, after sliding into his listener's mind with these two relatively acceptable statements, the speaking takes advantage of this accepting attitude to make a far more extreme interpretation: the United States itself is using deception and violence to oppose "democracy" and maintain "pro-fascist" regimes.

Another example:

"There is no doubt that devaluation of the pound sterling and the currency of a number of other countries economically tied to Great Britain or dependent on her is proof of a sudden increase in the economic crisis sweeping the whole capitalist world." (22 September 1949, A 2)

The devaluation of the pound was an indubitable fact; the picture of a crisis "sweeping the whole capitalist world" was perhaps not quite so factual in nature. Still another example:

"The arithmetical relation between the so-called majority and minority in the U.N. does not correspond to the real relation of political forces in the international arena. This is evidenced by the many favorable comments on the Soviet proposals,

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received from the broadest social spheres in various countries. Vishinsky is perfectly right in saying that the peoples will not support those who are coming out against the Soviet proposals, and that the adoption of these proposals would be regarded as a triumphant pronouncement of peace." (22 October 1948, A 3)

Here the essential but unobtrusive leap is from "many favorable comments" to "the peoples." The statement that there had been "many" favorable comments is plausible enough; from this, however, the speaker slides over to the statement that "the peoples"--not some individuals, nor some of the peoples, nor most of the peoples, but "the peoples"--are in favor of the Soviet proposals.

F. OVERSLANTING:

It is of course impossible to draw a sharp line between ordinary slanting, which we have listed as a necessary and probably legitimate propaganda technique, and "overslanting." There is perhaps a qualitative difference between explicit interpretations which the speaker believes to be "true" and those which he himself recognizes as exaggerations or distortions. Here, however, we are applying a less stringent criterion; we are asking only whether the distortion is so gross and tangible in nature that it might perhaps be made the basis for an effective "exposure" by an opposing propagandist. Four types of slanting which might in some cases come under this category are:

1. Automatic Shifting of Implicit Assumptions: For instance, every Soviet victory in the U.N. is interpreted as a victory for the democratic forces--the assumption being that those who voted for the Soviet proposals did so of their own free will. To illustrate:

> "These defeats (of the U.S.) prove that the democratic peoples have no desire to be and will not be silent witnesses of the imperialistic methods used by the colonial powers, methods which are contrary to the principles of the United Nations." (17 October 1947, A 2)

On the other hand, every Soviet defeat is interpreted as proof of U.S. domination--the assumption now apparently being that those who voted against the Soviet proposals could not have done so of their own free will (even though they are, in some cases, the same individuals who on other occasions voted the other way). For instance:

> "As for the Interim Committee where there would be no unanimity principle, there the U.S. counts on ruling the roost through the use of its voting machinery." (24 October 1947, A 1)

There are similar ready-made rules for the interpretation of many other types of events. For example, whenever Truman or any other member of a non-Communist government does something which Moscow disapproves of, it is likely to be attributed to the direct or indirect influence of Wall Street; and whenever he does anything which Moscow has been advocating, it is interpreted as an attempt to win the favor of the "democratic forces" in his country--a step "forced" upon him by the growing strength or the aroused indignation of these "democratic forces." In organizations which the Communists dominate, such as the WFTU, all opposition is automatically a "splitting" of the unity of the democratic forces; while in organizations which they do not dominate, such as the U.N., their own opposition to the majority is a courageous defense of national sovereignty or of some other high principle.

2. Slanted Paraphrase: Moscow usually uses its own words, rather than actual quotations, when it describes what one of its opponents has said. This leaves room for any amount of distortion without being accused of literal misquotation, and some distortion usually occurs. Typically, it takes place by the substitution of some of Moscow's words, slanted to support its line, for the words that the speaker originally used. For instance, Irving Brown is said to have told the AFL annual conference that the "chief task" of the

recently formed non-Communist international labor organization will be:

> "to assist in overthrowing the popular democratic governments in Eastern Europe as well as to struggle against the democratic forces in the colonies. ... One is only left with surprise at how far these gentlemen have gone in exposing their true role--the role of direct agents of imperialism in the workers' organizations." (13 October 1949, A 8)

Several propaganda devices are illustrated here. Slanted paraphrase appears in the substitution of the term "popular democratic governments" for the term "Communist-dominated governments," which is what Brown is much more likely to have said, and of "democratic forces" for "Communists" in the colonial context. By this device, it is made to appear that Brown "exposed" or admitted his open opposition to democracy itself, when what he actually did was to oppose Communists. And, in addition, we have a complete blurring of the distinction between non-Communist labor leaders and "imperialism" itself, introduced by the slide-in technique. Starting with the slanted but relatively plausible description of Brown's opposition to Communism, the writer ends with the interpretation that he is "a direct agent of imperialism."

3. Omitting the Context: It is not only quotations which can be distorted by ignoring the context. A paraphrase or, in fact, a description of almost any event can be given a different meaning by leaving a listener in ignorance of the total situation or factual context in which the statement or event actually occurred. The outstanding example of this in Soviet propaganda is the description of Western rearmament, the Atlantic Pact, etc., without any mention of the fear of Soviet aggression which constitutes the chief reason for and moral justification of these developments. In the absence of this context, military preparations can mean only something sinister--"militarism," aggression, and war. For example:

> "The overseas leaders of the American Party in France want to militarize the country. They need a French infantry and a French artillery, armed with standardized American weapons.... However, the Western Union Permanent Defense Council reckons without the peoples.... Neither the plans of the capitalists nor those of their military staffs will make them abandon the peace camp." (6 May 1949, B 3)

Combined with an appeal to French nationalism, we have here a characteristic reference to "militarization" with none of the defensive context which might give "militarization" something other than an aggressive connotation. (And, in addition, the use of the word "plans" and the implied opposition of all this to "the peace camp" directly suggest aggression.) In other attacks on Western "militarism" a characteristic phrase is "preparations for war." The use of this phrase, with no reference to the defensive character of the war which is feared by the West, inevitably suggests deliberate preparation for a war which is actually desired and intended.

An illustration of a specific quotation reported out of context is found in a broadcast of the official Soviet note of protest against "warmongering" by NEWSWEEK:

> "The article also outlines the plan of making use of the U.S. air force, air force bases, and atom bombs against the USSR, in particular for the destruction of such Soviet towns as Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Kharkov, Odessa, and others. ... The article states that U.S. strategists are planning to create a circular network of air bases around Russia with the view to tightening this network until the Russians are strangled. ... This article... constitutes an example of unbridled propaganda of a new war against the USSR." (18 June 1948, G 2)

The NEWSWEEK article was concerned with what would be the U.S. strategy in case of Soviet aggression, but by using the word "plan" without its defensive denotation it is here made to seem almost synonymous with a desire or intent to create such a war. And in the last sentence this is made explicit; the description of what might be done in case of Soviet aggression is called "unbridled propaganda of a new war."

4. Diabolism: Mos...'s most extreme departures from psychological realism come at the points at which it ascribes diabolical motives to its adversaries--motives such as an actual desire for atomic war, an actual desire to impair the economic stability of Western Europe, etc. There is more than an echo, in Soviet radio propaganda, of the fantastically diabolical acts and intentions which appeared in the "confessions" of the defendants in the Moscow trials. For example:

> "Truman, Acheson, Dulles, Vandenberg, and the speculators who profit out of the cold war are showing not the slightest intention of putting an end to their plans for an atomic war, on which all their hopes are founded." (29 September 1949, A 2)
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> "Taking advantage of the dollar shortage of the West European countries, the U.S. monopolies decided to tighten the credit noose around the necks of their victims (by insisting on devaluation)." (29 September 1949, A 6)
>
> "As to the dollar hunger in Europe, it is not only the result of the war expenditure, however great this may have been. It was planned by the Wall Street brain trust, prepared and put into practice by the ramified agencies of the latter." (12 March 1948, A 2)

Such unrealism is closely linked with the similar unrealism involved in a total denial of the element of fear in the psychology of the Western peoples. It is linked also with the general tendency to think in terms of absolute blacks and whites.